

QUESTION 2: INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS MULTIPLE AND INTERSECTING FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

The public administration in Norway is organized in such a way that the sector-based ministries are responsible for services and policies affecting the entire population. The authorities in different sectors and at different levels of Government have the responsibility for gender equality policies within their authority. As a general rule, legislation adopted in Norway is gender-neutral, except for schemes directed particularly at women and men. Combating racism and all forms of discrimination is of vital importance for the Government. Our aim is that everyone should have equal opportunities and freedom to make their own choices. The Government is working on various measures in order to combat racism and other forms of discrimination. Here can be mentioned:

- The Government has recently presented a strategy against hate speech.
- Currently we are working on developing a new comprehensive Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act

2A)

The Ethnicity Anti-Discrimination Act prohibits ethnic discrimination. The Gender Equality Act prohibits gender discrimination. The Government wishes to strengthen gender equality and improve discrimination protection for everyone, and intends therefore propose a comprehensive equality and anti-discrimination Act. The proposal calls for replacing the four existing gender equality and anti-discrimination acts with a new consolidated Act in order to strengthen discrimination protections in general. In the bill that was sent out for public consultation, the Government proposed to include a separate section in the Act to clarify that multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination are prohibited. The Government aims to propose a bill to Parliament in spring 2017.

The mandate of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud specifies that the Ombud shall see the different grounds of discrimination in context, develop interdisciplinary skills and ability to deal with multiple discrimination and discrimination at the intersection of gender and other discrimination grounds.

2B)

The Government has among others the following measures :

- Established a new National Human Rights Institution
- Launched a new Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism 2016 – 2020

We have also launched a new Action Plan against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression that includes immigrants.

2C)

See 2B. In general when required, all plans and measures are multisectoral. In general

measures are funded by the respective sector. NGO and user participation is a central element in Norwegian policy in all major sectors.

The Ministry of Children and Equality will introduce a supplement to the state budget in 2018 that provides a gender assessment of the state budget as a whole.

2D)

In general when relevant, all plans and measures take into consideration multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Eg. the LGBTI-plan includes measures for immigrants and persons with disabilities. The white paper "Gender equality in practice" also includes measures for immigrants.

QUESTION 3: MECANISMS TO ENSURE PARTICIPATION

The Government recently launched a strategy against hate speech. The strategy aims to help to prevent and combat hate speech in public debate and in public spaces. The strategy also aims to combat the consequences of hate speech. Efforts to increase knowledge about hate speech, as well as efforts in the areas of education, civil society and judiciary have priority in the strategy. A reference group has given valuable input to the plan and will also be consulted in the follow-up.

Efforts against hate speech, efforts to promote freedom of expression and work to promote equality and prevent discrimination should be viewed in context. This includes efforts to combat hate crimes, racism, bullying, radicalization and violent extremism. The strategy must be viewed in relation with the Government's action plan to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, The action plan against anti-Semitism and The action plan on radicalization and violent extremism.

Several immigrant organisations have become an integral part of the voluntary sector in Norway. The Government provides grants to immigrant organisations and other NGOs, both local and nationwide, to encourage participation, dialogue and interaction. The aim of such grants is to strengthen local participation by immigrants and their children. Grants are awarded to national resource centers that focus on integration issues. Grants are also available to NGOs that provide information and guidance for new immigrants.

Dialogue and contact between the Government and civil society are important aspect of policy-making and policy-implementation processes. Among newly instituted measures is an annual dialogue conference. The first conference was held in 2014 and the second one last year. Gender related issues are part of these meetings.

In the *national* election in 2013, the number of voters with an immigrant background had increased by 50 000 persons compared to the election in 2009. Altogether 213 000 persons with an immigrant background were entitled to vote, which corresponds to six percent of all eligible voters. IMDi initiated measures to encourage a higher voter turnout among

naturalised Norwegians at the 2013 election. The total electoral turnout was 78 percent, an increase of 1.8 percentage points from the last national election. However, only 53 percent of Norwegian citizens with an immigrant background voted. Immigrant women had a higher turnout than men did, and participation in the youngest age group was higher than in the 2009 election.

QUESTION 4: EMPOWERMENT

All residents are expected to contribute and participate in the Norwegian society, locally and nationally. The aim of the integration policy is to enable immigrants to become part of and have a sense of belonging to the Norwegian society. Participation in working life and good Norwegian language skills are keys to inclusion. Even though the integration policy in Norway is based on mainstreaming, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security is responsible for coordinating the integration policies for immigrants and their children. This means that all public sector agencies should ensure that their services reach all groups of the population, including immigrants. Each public agency is most knowledgeable about its services and challenges, and all agencies are responsible for the financial and legal means available to implement policies or to initiate adjustments or changes. Coordination is necessary to ensure that national policies in various fields function in unison and contribute towards achieving the goals of equal rights and duties.

Since 2006, a monitoring tool has been part of efforts of the Government to ensure efficient mainstreaming. Annually, a comprehensive report on integration is presented together with the proposal for the Government budget proposal for the next year. The report presents the development of a series of integration indicators, based on contributions from several ministries. The importance of this tool has been recognized and the system has been revised and improved as National indicators for Integration.

The Introduction Act was amended in 2004 after a period of trial projects in a selection of municipalities. The purpose of the Act is to increase the possibility of newly arrived immigrants participating in working and social life, and to increase their financial independence. The Act regulates both the introduction program and the language training.

The target group for "The Introduction Program" is refugees and their family members between 18 and 55 years of age, who need to obtain basic qualifications. There is both a right and an obligation to take part in the program. Correspondingly there is an obligation for the municipality to provide a program for persons in the target group. The right and obligation apply to persons who are resident in a municipality pursuant to a special agreement between the immigrant authorities and the municipality.

The White Paper "Social inclusion and a second chance – Coordinated efforts for adult learning" contains measures designed to give adults better opportunities to strengthen their skills, increase their opportunities to participate in training and to recognize the skills which immigrants already possess upon entry into the country. The Government's aim is that each

individual shall have the skills that form the basis for a stable and lasting labour market attachment. To reach this goal the Government will develop a coordinated and coherent policy for adults with low education, poor basic skills or skills without formal recognition. Many of the challenges in this field cut across sectoral lines. The white paper is therefore prepared jointly by the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. The white paper has three main priority areas that together are aimed at creating better access to education for adults and a better basis for cooperation between educational authorities, integrational authorities and labour market authorities: 1) Improving training in basic skills, 2) Improving opportunities for upper secondary education and 3) Improving the quality of the special measures aimed at immigrants.

"Dembra" is a competence development programme for schools related to the learning environment and the school's mandate to educate the democratic citizens of tomorrow. "Dembra" offers support to schools that want to work on perceptions of "the others" among teachers and pupils; from prejudices and xenophobia to racism, antisemitism and extremism. The starting points are the challenges that the individual school is experiencing. The programme structure is adapted to limit the amount of extra work for the school; for example, by holding courses for teachers during the school's allocated development time. Group hostility and hate challenge democracy. It excludes and splits people and goes against the idea that we are all individuals who should have a voice and an opportunity to participate. Working systematically to counter these divisive attitudes is therefore part of the school's mandate to strengthen democratic competence and promote genuine citizenship for everyone.

In 2011, there were a total of 48 crisis centres in Norway. In June 2009, the Norwegian Parliament passed the Municipal Crisis Centre Services Act (the Crisis Centre Act). The Act entered into force on 1 January 2010. The purpose of the Crisis Centre Act is to ensure the provision of good, comprehensive crisis centre services for women, men and children who are subjected to domestic violence or threats of such violence. Under the Act, municipalities are required to ensure the provision of crisis centre services for these groups, where they can receive counselling and safe, temporary accommodation. Individuals may contact the crisis centre services without an appointment or referral. Under section 3 of the Crisis Centre Act, the municipality shall ensure that users have access to a qualified interpreter if this is necessary to ensure that they receive fully adequate services. The municipality shall put in place procedures for quality assurance, ordering of and payment for interpretation services.

Legal aid for women (JURK) is a student run legal aid office. JURK provides free legal aid and legal advice for all women.

QUESTION 5: REDRESS, REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION MEASURES

Persons insured under the National Insurance Scheme are entitled to old-age pension survivors' pension disability benefit basic benefit and attendance benefit in case of disablement, technical aids etc., work assessment allowance, occupational injury benefits,

benefits to single parents, cash benefits in case of sickness, maternity, adoption and unemployment, medical benefits in case of sickness and maternity and funeral grant.

The Crisis Centres provide services to men, women and children who have suffered violence in close relations, cf. answer to question 4.

Today it is only the courts that can award redress and compensation in cases of discrimination. The Government has sent out for public consultation a bill proposing that the authority of the Tribunal which enforces the equality and anti-discrimination legislation shall be extended, so that it can award compensation in discrimination cases within working life.

QUESTION 6: CAPACITY BUILDING FOR KEY ACTORS

According to the Public Administration Act, all public agencies have a duty to provide guidance and information to the public. The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) has a central role in coordinating efforts to ensure that people with an immigrant background obtain equitable public services. Where there are language barriers, adequate interpretation services are needed, but such services are not always available. Legal measures have been implemented to ensure that public agencies do not use children as interpreters for family members. Measures to increase the recruitment of immigrants to jobs in the public sector – for example to work in kindergartens, schools, health- and child welfare services, and cultural services – and to incorporate the understanding of cultural diversity as a topic in relevant courses of study may also contribute to the provision of equitable public services.

QUESTION 7: REGARDING CHALLENGES

Many immigrants find it difficult to learn and understand Norwegian. Language is therefore a major challenge. Among others the Government has decided to draft a new Interpreting Act. The Act is supposed to clarify when the obligation of the public sector to use qualified interpreters comes into force, such as in situations where the right to due process of law and equal treatment are concerned.

QUESTION 8: REGARDING UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW CONTRIBUTION

Norway values highly the UPR as a key venue and tool to promote women's rights, including their right to freedom from all forms of violence. We note with satisfaction that, since the inception of the UPR, 2122 recommendations concerning violence against women, covering more than 150 countries in all regions, have been made and that 2013 of these have been accepted. Norway has submitted 61 recommendations, 56 of them have been accepted. We have received 12 recommendations and have accepted 11.

Yours sincerely,

Hege Nygård
Director General

Georg Hilmar Antonsen
Senior Adviser

The document is approved electronically, as such no handwritten signatures are required.

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